

Sans Souci
E. Corbin St. (formerly North St.)
Hillsborough
Orange County
North Carolina

HABS No. NC-221

HABS
NC,
68-HILB
13-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS
NC,
68-HILBO,
13-

Historic American Buildings Survey

Name of Structure - Sans Souci

Address - E. Corbin Street (formerly North Street)
Hillsborough, Hillsborough Township
Orange County,
North Carolina

Present Owner - Mr. and Mrs. Samuel T. Latta
Sans Souci
Hillsborough, N. C.

Present Occupant - Mr. and Mrs. Samuel T. Latta
Sans Souci
Hillsborough, N. C.

Present Use - Private home.

Brief Statement of Significance - This beautiful frame manor house was the town house of William Cain, Jr. (His country house was the mansion called "Hard Scrabble," still standing and still interesting.) Sans Souci, aside from the fact that it has belonged to a succession of prominent people, is extremely interesting architecturally; its central block has splendid woodwork and a very fine Great Hall. Its wings are plainer but very beautiful. The additions (to the north) probably carried out by John Berry, include a typical Berry staircase. The outhouses here - the office, kitchen, and servants' quarters - are also extremely interesting. Waterman (The Early Architecture of North Carolina, p. 41) links Sans Souci with other early North Carolina houses having some connection with Plate 37 of Morris' Rural Architecture (1750).

Date of Erection - ca. 1812 (original portion; wings may be later); addition at rear - after 1840.

Architect - Unknown. John Berry, Hillsborough's brickmason - architect, almost certainly made the additions and alterations to the north.

Builder, suppliers, etc. - Dr. William Cain, II, is said to have built Sans Souci, very likely with slave labor.

Original Plan, Construction, etc. - The original house may have consisted solely of the central block. (There are evidences of a fireplace at the eastern side of the "Great Hall.") Various people have suggested that the central block is considerably earlier than 1812. The wings are very much plainer than the central portion, but it is possible that the paneling and cornices of the central portion were added later and that the whole - block and wings - belongs to the same date. The house would thus have been a 2-story central block with flanking single story right-angle wings. The double doors at the rear of the entrance hall once led outdoors.

Tradition says that John Berry added the present dining-room and back hall, extending the roof line in a remarkably graceful sweep and adding the low dormers. A rear porch has now become a small kitchen. The original 2-room outside kitchen with its fine chimney stands close by. Sans Souci has fine mantels (all different) and very fine double paneling. It is possible, however, that these are not original.

Physical History:

Original and Subsequent Owners:

1. (June 7, 1754) - John Earl Granville granted a 663-acre tract to his agent, William Churton. This deed is not filed in Orange County but is recorded in the Land Grant Office in Raleigh.
2. Sept. 9, 1754 (Deed Book 2, 128) - William Churton deeds the 663-acre tract (one record says 653 acres) to Francis Corbin for 5 pound sterling "except 400 acres of land laid off for a town by the name of Orange."
3. _____, 1777 (Deed not validated until 1780) - Edmund (Edwin) Corbin, Esq., heir of Col. Francis Corbin sells the 253-acre tract remaining from the grant, to James Hogg. Hogg had great difficulty in verifying signatures but his claim was finally proved in May, 1780. This tract, lying immediately east and northeast of the town of Hillsborough is approximately square in shape and includes the present estates of Burnside, Sans Souci, and Montrose. It proceeded from a point on the Roanoke River along the eastern boundary of Hillsborough northward 5 chains from its northeast corner, thence east $44\frac{1}{2}$ chains, thence south $38\frac{1}{2}$ chains to the River, then up the meanders of the River to the first station.
4. (May 2, 1784) _____ James Hogg sells the "Signer" William Hooper two tracts of land. One of these, for 30 acres, is part of the Granville grant described above and is the tract on which Sans Souci is to be built. It is 16 ch. long by 19 ch. wide at the northeast corner of the town of Hillsborough. The second tract of 29 acres is to the north beyond a tract of 146 acres which William Hooper also bought in 1784 from Joseph Moore and which was part of a Granville grant in 1756 to William Reed.
5. Will of William Hooper (Will is 12 pages long - in State Dept. of Archives and History) - April 24, 1788, proved 1790. Leaves estate to his wife Anne Clark Hooper.
6. Will of Anne Clark Hooper (Will Book C, 56), March 31, 1793, proved Aug. 1795, leaves to each child, William, Elizabeth (Mrs. Henry H. Watters), and Thomas "one third part of landed property." Both William and Thomas died. William left heirs, but Mrs. Watters inherited a major portion of the Hooper property.
7. Dec. 10, 1810 (DB 14, 14) - Mrs. Elizabeth Watters of Wilmington, N. C. sells to William Bond and David Yarborough three tracts of land totalling 206 acres (actually 205) for \$830.00. These include: 1) the tract of 30 acres on which Sans Souci stands today; 2) the tract of 146 acres just to the north which William Hooper had bought of Joseph Moore and; 3) the tract of 29 acres just to the north of tract No. 2 which Hooper had bought from James Hogg.
8. June 1, 1812 (DB 14, 569) - William Bond sells to David Yarborough his half interest in the whole purchase for \$415. Here the tracts are described as comprising $207\frac{1}{2}$ acres.
9. _____ Although no deed exists, it seems evident that David Yarborough sold the tracts to Dr. William Cain II who built Sans Souci on the 30 acre tract at the corner of the town of Hillsborough. The price per acre would indicate that no building of consequence stood there when Bond and Yarborough held it.

10. Will of William Cain II (Will Book G, 182) - April 10, 1856; proved Nov., 1857. The will does not mention Sans Souci by name although "the house in which I formerly lived" is thought to be Sans Souci. It devises to "my son-in-law Pride Jones, in fee simple" or to his wife Martha Ann (Cain) in his stead the tract of land near Hillsborough which I purchased from David Yarborough....."
11. June 4, 1875 Dr. Pride Jones and Martha Ann Jones execute a mortgage deed on Sans Souci to Maria F. Badgett of Orange County.
12. June 3, 1889 - Sans Souci is sold at public auction on June 3, 1889 to Calvin E. Parrish who purchased it for \$2500 and immediately assigned his bid to (Bishop) Theodore B. Lyman of Raleigh. See DB 52, 252 and DB 53, 93, for deeds relative to the transaction.
13. Feb. 27, 1891 (DB 52, 483) - Pride Jones et al deed Sans Souci (166 acres) to (Bishop) Theodore B. Lyman, Raleigh, for \$2500. The deed recites that Pride Jones had given a mortgage deed dated June 4, 1875 "on his residence and farm near the town of Hillsboro." No interest was paid after June 4, 1888, and the debt was not paid. Said tract of land was sold at public auction on June 3, 1889. (A description of the 166-acre estate follows "as surveyed by George W. Tate, January 21, 1891.)
14. July 22, 1893 (DB 53, 401) - Susan B. and Theodore B. Lyman sell Sans Souci to Jennie L. Ruffin for \$3500. (Description the same as in the Lyman deed. Bishop Lyman is said to have built the carriage house at Sans Souci.)
15. Will of Jennie L. Ruffin (Will Book K, 356) - proved March 16, 1934 - Jennie L. Ruffin bequeaths all of her property, real and personal, to Samuel T. Latta, Jr.
16. Present Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Samuel T. Latta, Jr.

Notes on Alterations and Additions: It seems fairly clear that a chimney was removed from the east end of the Great Hall and that one was built on the north side to provide a fireplace for the dining-room. The dining-room fireplace was probably opened by Berry who almost certainly 1) added the dining-room and rear staircase with the Asher Benjamin brackets, 2) altered the rear roofline and added the dormers, and 3) removed the original portico and added the porch. Much of this was probably done after the death of Dr. William Cain when his daughter "Pattie", Martha Ann Cain, married Dr. Pride Jones.

Historical Events Connected with Structure: The Caines or Cains (the first is the proper spelling historically) are among the area's oldest and wealthiest families. Dr. William Cain II built Sans Souci and used the office as his medical office as did his remarkable son-in-law, Dr. Pride Jones, son of Cadwallader Jones. Later, Sans Souci came into the ownership of Episcopal Bishop Theodore B. Lyman. For most of its long life, Sans Souci has been in the hands of cultured and distinguished people.

Important Old Views: One of uncertain age is in the Orange County
(Location) Historical Museum.

Sources of Information: (1) Deed Books and Will Books of Orange County in Orange County
(Location) Courthouse, Hillsborough, N. C.; (2) Interviews with Mrs. Samuel T. Latta and Miss Mary F. Henderson of Chapel Hill, N. C.; (3) Folder on the Caine or Cain Family and the building of Sans Souci compiled by Mr. Hugh Conway Browning, Hillsborough, N. C.; (4) Frances Benjamin Johnston and Thomas Tileston Waterman, The Early Architecture of North Carolina (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941, 1947), described and illustrated, pp. 41, 138; (5) Archibald Henderson and Bayard Wootten, Old Houses and Gardens of North Carolina (Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1939), Plates 56 and 57 accompanied by descriptions of interior and exterior; (6) Two maps of Sans Souci's original 3 tracts of land drawn by Charles H. Blake (Hillsborough Historical Society).